

Office of the State Treasurer Completes ARPA Funds Distribution

Just under \$44 million dollars is in the hands of Delaware's 55 non-county, non-metropolitan governments from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). The federal government charged the Office of the State Treasurer (OST) with developing a process to distribute those funds and State Treasurer Colleen Davis says the first round of the job is finished.

"Residents of Delaware's local communities can get the help they need now that their local leaders have their ARPA funds," Davis said. "We understood that each city and town had specific needs, and the ability to start addressing those needs depended on our office making sure the appropriate amount of money got in the appropriate hands as quickly and efficiently as possible."

Treasurer Davis believed a critical element of ARPA was the ability for local governments to decide how to use the money to best serve their constituents and their communities.

"No one knows better than those on the front lines how to best help themselves," Davis said. "Our job was to verify the amount of money each nonentitlement unit should receive, based on the budget information that each nonentitlement unit submitted to us, and then get the money out the door. We did not want to stand in the way of dollars being deployed into Delaware communities by making the distribution process unnecessarily burdensome. Our cities and towns have pressing issues in need of immediate funding, and that's why we began developing our process back in March almost immediately after President Biden signed the legislation."

Use of ARPA funds will not go unreported or unchecked. Each

nonentitlement unit is required by the legislation to submit a Project and Expenditure Report to the federal government annually. The reports will include descriptions of all funded projects, expenses and obligations associated with each project, project status, and project demographic distribution.

The second round of ARPA funds will be delivered in 2022 and Treasurer Davis says that distribution should be even smoother.

“Because we developed a secure process for local governments as well as our ARPA dashboard providing clear, transparent information to the public, everything is already in place to deliver the funding next year,” Davis said. “We faced what could have been an overwhelming task, but from day one, I knew we would rise to the occasion. I cannot thank every member of our office enough for making this happen, and also want to express appreciation to the Delaware League of Local Governments for its partnership in this effort.”